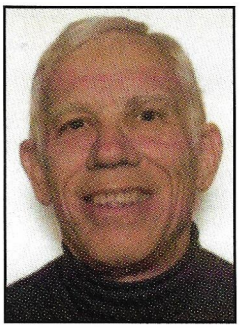
Herm Botzow earns MMR #299



Herm Botzow found a Lionel 1666 Prairie Loco and three coaches under the Christmas tree in 1942. It must have been love at first sight. By age 12, he started building structures from Frank Ellison's articles in Model Builder. Next came a sprawling, but unreliable, hi-rail layout complete with lift bridges, two yards and some scenery. Interests shifted to other areas with the onset of high school and college.

Much to his surprise in college, there actually were great jobs in real transportation planning so Herm embarked on a 35 year career with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey where he was fortunate enough to be involved in planning transit connections to the World Trade Center, the New York regions airports and other facilities. As soon as he and his wife, Sue, settled into their first apartment, he built a loop layout around a small bedroom. However, the arrival of the first of three daughters required another time out from model railroading. By 1972, parenting duties slackened and a new house offered more space for a layout, so construction began on a third Buckeye Railroad, one that was small but scenic and operable. During construction, Atlas came out with an inexpensive line of 2-rail "O" gauge track and rolling stock so the change was made to scale operations with dramatic improvements in appearance.

With membership in the NMRA, came information on the Achievement Program. In 1992, Herm earned the Master—Builder Scenery certificate. This was followed in 1993 with certificates in Master Builder—Structures, Model Railroad Engineer—Civil and Model Railroad Engineer—Electrical, all thanks to the encouragement of John MacGown and Walter Neumen, who traveled a great distance to visit Herm's layout and offer a host of excellent suggestions. Herm retired in 1994, and moved to a house with a real "O" gauge cellar, 1500 square feet, home to the current Buckeye Railroad. By 1998, the layout was fully operational and the Chief Dispatcher certificate was earned. This was followed by certificates for Model Railroad Author and Master Builder—Cars. During this period, NMRA members Ed Bommer, Jim Heidt and Paul Allard all offered the valuable suggestions and support that were needed to complete the program.

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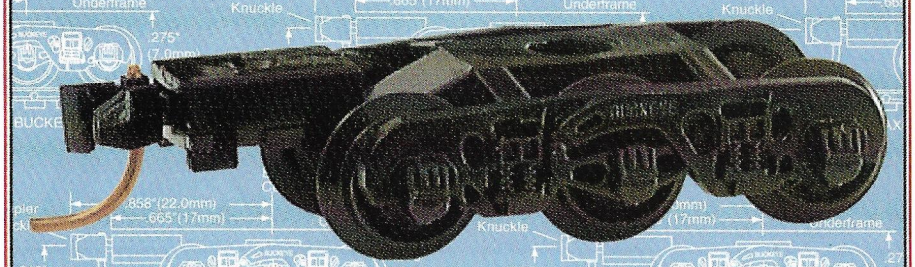

Buckeye trucks were originally developed in the early part of the twentieth century to address the growing need for higher capacity freight trucks. As freight cars started to carry 100 to 150 tons per car, the older four wheel trucks could not handle the loads. The addition of the extra set of wheels added greater capacity, but also created new problems with load distribution, spring arrangement and sideframe construction. The Buckeye 6-wheel truck answered these problems so well that they can still be seen in use today with very little modification from the original design. They have been used on many different types of applications, including high capacity steam engine tenders, cranes and other heavy equipment cars, and heavy weight and depressed center flat cars.

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